



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY TRAINING CENTER AND FORT JACKSON  
4325 JACKSON BOULEVARD  
FORT JACKSON, SC 29207-5015

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

IMSE-JAC-RS

29 AUG 2011

### MEMORANDUM FOR

Commanders, All Units Reporting Directly to This Headquarters  
Commanders, Fort Jackson Partners in Excellence  
Directors and Chiefs, Staff Offices/Departments, This Headquarters

SUBJECT: Fort Jackson Policy Memorandum #19 – Religious Accommodations

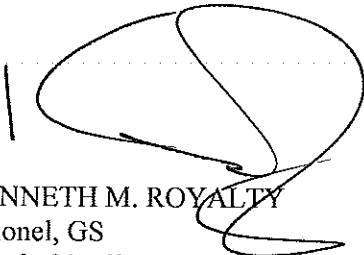
1. Reference: AR 165-1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army, Para 2-3 and 13-3.
2. A basic principle of our nation is free exercise of religion. The Department of Defense (DoD) places a high value on the rights of members of the Armed Forces to observe the tenets of their respective religions.
3. Commanders, at all levels, are responsible for the free exercise of religion and the religious, spiritual, moral and ethical well being of all personnel in their command. Accordingly, commanders will:
  - a. Support religious activities for all personnel to include Soldiers on an equitable basis. Soldiers will be allowed to attend special post wide religious activities in addition to their regular worship services. For example, a Roman Catholic Soldier will be allowed to attend the post wide Easter Sunrise service as well as the regularly scheduled Catholic mass.
  - b. Provide adequate time and opportunity for the free exercise of religion.
  - c. Be aware of and accommodate special religious requirements of personnel in their command consistent with regulations and training requirements.
  - d. If training requirements permit, excuse personnel who are required by faith to observe prescribed customs or attend religious services.
  - e. Be aware of all religious holidays when scheduling mandatory training. Be prepared with makeup training when conflicts cannot be avoided.
4. Commanders will ensure their cadre are aware that:

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- a. Identification tags are not the sole basis to determine whether a Soldier can attend a specific religious service.
  - b. Soldiers, to include basic combat training Soldiers, are permitted to carry, possess, or display the holy scriptures of their faith.
  - c. Soldiers may have dietary requirements that will be accommodated. Prior planning will ensure the availability of special Meals Ready to Eat (MREs).
  - d. A Soldier will not be ridiculed because of his/her religious faith.
5. Chaplains have the primary responsibility to assist commanders in the planning, development, education, and implementation of the command's responsibilities. Involve chaplains in cadre education up front.
6. Religious support facilities are dedicated facilities used for religious services and other activities related to the spiritual and moral welfare of the command. As such:
- a. The chapel environment will be religiously neutral when the facility is not being used for scheduled worship. Permanent or fixed chapel furnishings, such as the altar, pulpit, lectern, communion rail, prie-dieu, or reredos, will be devoid of distinctive religious symbols.
  - b. Distinctive religious symbols, such as crosses, crucifixes, the Star of David, menorah, and other religious symbols, will not be affixed or displayed permanently on the chapel exterior or grounds.
  - c. Portable religious symbols, icons, or statues may be used within a chapel during times of scheduled religious worship. Symbols are to be moved or covered when not in use.
  - d. Chapels must be available to people of all faith groups for meditation and prayer when formal religious services are not scheduled.
7. It is the DoD policy that requests for accommodations will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline. (DoD Directive 1300.17)
8. The proponent for this policy memorandum is the Installation Chaplain's Office, 751-3121.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



KENNETH M. ROYALTY  
Colonel, GS  
Chief of Staff